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Collingwood  
Subdivision

Yellowstone  
County

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# Department of Health and Environmental Sciences

STATE OF MONTANA HELENA, MONTANA 59601

August 14, 1979

A. C. Knight, M.D., F.C.C.P.  
Director

Yellowstone City-County Health Department, Rooms 310-311, Courthouse, Billings, MT 59101  
Yellowstone City-County Planning Board, Room 303, Courthouse, Billings, MT 59101  
Governor's Office, Helena, MT 59601  
Information Unit, Dept. of Health & Env. Sciences, Helena, MT 59601  
Montana State Library, Helena, Mt 59601  
Environmental Quality Council, Helena, MT 59601  
Department of Community Affairs, Helena, MT 59601  
Department of Fish and Game, Helena, MT 59601  
Department of Highways, Helena, MT 59601  
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Helena, MT 59601  
Montana Bureau of Mines & Geology, c/o Montana Tech, W. Park St., Butte, MT 59701  
Fire Marshall Bureau, Department of Justice, Helena, MT 59601  
Soil Conservation Service, 1629 Ave. D, Billings, MT 59101  
Office of Interstate Landsales Registration, Attn: Carlton Goodwin, Title Bldg.,  
Room 324, 909-17th St., Denver, CO 80202  
Yellowstone County Commissioners, Courthouse, Billings, MT 59101  
Yellowstone County Sheriff, Courthouse, Billings, MT 59101  
Environmental Information Center, Box 12, Helena, MT 59601  
Ken Korte, Montana Historical Society, 225 N. Roberts, Helena, MT 59601  
Howard Zohller, Manager, Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., Huntley, MT 59037  
Henry Myers, Superintendent, Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., P.O. Box 2546, Billings, MT 59111  
O'Donnell Fire Service, 2401 - 2nd Avenue N., Billings, MT 59101  
Mountain Bell, Engineering Department, P.O. Box 2554, Billings, MT 59103

RE: COLLINGWOOD SUBDIVISION  
Yellowstone County

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed preliminary environmental review has been prepared for Collingwood Subdivision in Yellowstone County, and is submitted for your consideration. Questions and comments will be accepted until August 29, 1979. One extension of time not to exceed seven days will be granted upon request if there is sufficient reason for the request. All comments should be sent to the undersigned.

Sincerely,

  
Edward W. Casne, P.E., Chief  
Subdivision Bureau  
Environmental Sciences Division

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

AUG 21 1979

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930 E Lyndale Ave.  
Helena, Montana 59601

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Enclosures



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES  
Cogswell Building, Helena, Montana 59601  
(406)449-3946

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Division/Bureau Environmental Sciences Division - Subdivision Bureau

Project or Application Collingwood Subdivision, Yellowstone County

Description of Project The proposed subdivision consists of 62 lots on approximately 76 acres  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Laurel. The land is currently used as pasture land. The proposed lots will be served by individual wells and septic tanks with subsurface drainfields.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Terrestrial & aquatic life and habitats			*			X
2. Water quality, quantity and distribution			*			X
3. Geology & soil quality, stability and moisture			*			X
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality			*			X
5. Aesthetics			*			X
6. Air quality			*			X
7. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				*		
8. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy		*				X
9. Historical and archaeological sites					*	



POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Social structures and mores					*	
2. Cultural uniqueness and diversity				*		
3. Local and state tax base & tax revenue	*					X
4. Agricultural or industrial production	*					X
5. Human health			*			
6. Quantity and distribution of community and personal income		*				X
7. Access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities			*			.
8. Quantity and distribution of employment		*				X
9. Distribution and density of population and housing		*				X
10. Demands for government services	*					X
11. Industrial & commercial activity		*				X
12. Demands for energy	*					X
13. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals			*			X
14. Transportation networks & traffic flows		*				X

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction

None

Individuals or groups contributing to this PER. O'Donnell Fire Service, Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office, Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., Montana-Dakota Utilities

Recommendation concerning preparation of EIS Recommend against preparation of EIS.

PER Prepared by: Gary J. Wiens

Date: 7/27/79



## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. The wet area along the stream near the southwest edge of the proposed subdivision provides a habitat for small animals. The presence of homeowners and their children will disturb some of these animals and cause some to leave the area.

While there is a stream flowing through this property, it is too small to support any aquatic life of significance.

2. Most of the storm drainage from this subdivision will enter the Big Ditch. This ditch flows near the southern side of the proposed subdivision. Since this ditch already carries a high sediment load, it is unlikely that drainage will further degrade the water quality or impair the use of water from Big Ditch.

A large spring, with an estimated flow of 30 to 40 gallons per minute, is located on Lot 13 of Block 1. The flow from the spring enters the small stream and eventually flows into the Big Ditch.

The High Ditch borders the proposed subdivision at the higher, northwest corner of Lot 18 of Block 3. No effect on the quantity or quality of this water is foreseen, however, the seepage from the High Ditch could raise the groundwater levels of the nearby lots. Groundwater levels rising to within six feet of the ground surface preclude the use of subsurface sewage disposal.

A small irrigation ditch flows through the proposed subdivision. The owner, Don Bolenske, has stated that this ditch is dry and unused most of the year, but must be maintained in order to provide water to an adjacent user. Each sewage drainfield must maintain a 100-foot separation from any ditch.

3. Tests done by the developer indicate that soil permeability is such that sewage drainfields will function properly. These drainfields must be placed in areas where surface slopes do not exceed 15% and in most lots this will not be a problem. However, on Lots 13, 14 and 15 of Block 1 drainfields must be carefully placed so that building site, well and replacement area are available.

The developer indicates that "rock falls, or land, mud or snow slides should not occur in this subdivision."

4. Most of the site is covered by pasture grasses. Wetland plants are found near the stream at the southwest end of the site.

Existing ground cover will be disrupted during construction and will be replaced by lawns, trees and shrubbery common to home sites. No known critical plant communities will be altered in this development.

5. Open pastureland will be replaced by the sights and sounds of a housing development. Passersby and nearby farmers will be aware of the expansion of the Laurel community as this development will extend the perimeter of growth.
6. Construction disturbs natural ground cover and will create a temporary increase in dust. When construction is complete and homeowners plant lawns, trees and shrubs the dust level will subside.

A faint, light-colored watermark or background image of a classical building with four prominent columns and a triangular pediment is visible across the entire page.

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<https://archive.org/details/preliminaryenvir1979wien>

Some dust can be expected from the gravel roads, Downy Road and Pinyon Drive, that will serve the lots of the proposed subdivision.

8. The developer, in the environmental impact assessment, states:

"The tract is all in pasture. Current productivity is about 4 acres per animal unit. SCS capability classification ranges from class II for the McRae Loam and Class II for Lambert Silt Loam (4-7% slopes) to Class V rating for the Alluvial Land. Other capability units are listed with the soil overlay. Generally these ratings would bear out the farmer's contention that it is basically fair land, but it sure is hard to irrigate."

This development results in the loss of nearly 70 acres of pasture land.

Many homeowners would commute to Billings to work and shop resulting in demand for automobile fuels. Billings is approximately 16 miles from Laurel and a round trip from the subdivision site to Billings and back is at least 35 miles.



HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

3. The owner currently pays about \$800.00 annually in property taxes on the site. This figure includes his home and improvements. The developer estimates that at full development the proposed subdivision will generate \$45,000 per year at today's tax rates.
4. See comment #8 under "Physical Environment".
6. Local businesses in Laurel, such as garages, grocery stores and restaurants, will experience an increase in business as the subdivision is developed. Laurel businesses will compete with Billings establishments in attracting customers. The influx of new residents will have a stimulating effect on the economy of Laurel.
8. See comment #6 under "Human Environment".
9. The development of this site will transform sparsely populated land into a rural subdivision. While this occurrence places 61 families where there are none at this time, this increase is consistent with the patterns of growth in the Laurel area.
10. In a letter to the developer John Lackman, Superintendent of the Laurel Public Schools, stated:

"The proposed subdivision for single family residences northeast of Laurel on the Yard Office Road would add approximately 125-150 students to our school population. This increase will have a serious impact on our school facilities and transportation system. It would undoubtedly require adding classrooms and busses to our school facilities."

Mountain Bell has indicated that they will provide telephone service to this site.

Doug O'Donnell, of O'Donnell Fire Service, stated in a telephone conversation that fire service will be provided by private subscription. His service has an 8 to 10 minute response time for the Laurel area. Homeowners are normally informed by their insurance companies that they need to contact the fire service to obtain fire protection.

Medical facilities are available in both Billings and Laurel. Billings has ambulance services.

Larry Barndt, resident deputy sheriff in Laurel, felt that the Collingwood subdivision would not create a significant demand for law-enforcement services, but did add that as growth occurs in the Laurel area additional manpower will be needed.

Montana-Dakota Utilities intends to serve the proposed subdivision with natural gas through a systematic installation of lines from east to west. However, Henry Myers, Superintendent, stated in a letter that,

"As we are presently on a limited growth basis and a limited amount of natural gas allocations available, Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. cannot guarantee any natural gas service availability until the dwelling is in actual construction. Lastly, as this allocation policy is



being acted upon by the F.E.R.C. and a final decision can come at any time, the above stated rules therefore can change at any time."

Electricity will be provided by the Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc. Since power from Colstrip units 3 and 4 may not be available in the early 1980's and other sources of additional electrical power have not yet been worked out, the Cooperative advises "that the developer consider some kind of alternate energy for space and/or water heating. It would also be advisable for the building specifications to conform to the latest rules and regulations on weatherization standards."

11. See comment #6 under "Human Environment".
12. A temporary demand for energy will result from the construction of the dwellings and required roads.

Homeowners commuting to Billings create a long-term demand for gasoline supplies. Additional growth in Laurel may provide jobs for residents of Collingwood Subdivision and lessen the gasoline consumption of the residents who would no longer commute to Billings.

13. According to the developer, the subdivision is within the master planning area being adopted by Laurel and that plan envisions this area as residential.
14. The developer estimates 427 automobile trips per day as a result of this proposal. All of these trips will be carried on Yard Office Road, a gravelled county road.





